

SOCIAL PROBLEMS FACING THE ELDERLY FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF ASSOCIATES IN THE DAY CARE HOMES IN THE CITY OF AMMAN: A FIELD STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the social, economic and demographic characteristics of the elderly and to discover the social problems facing them, and to identify the nature of the relationship between the elderly and their social environment (the family, the club), and to verify the statistically significant differences between social problems that the elderly suffer due to variables: (gender, social status, age, health status, monthly income, kinship relationship, place of residence), and the study followed the method of social survey with the sample, where a random sample of 135 respondents from the organizers of the day care homes for the elderly was collected.

The study found a similar presence between males and females, and that most of the elderly do not suffer from chronic diseases as well as the adaptation of the elderly affiliated to day clubs with the social environment provided by them, and that it compensates them for the family environment that recorded a decrease in the relationship of the elderly with their families compared to their relationship with the day club and its affiliates, and to the presence of statistically significant differences in social problems according to the gender variable, and the differences were in favor of females as well as the age and social status variable, and the absence of differences according to the variables (health status, relationship of kinship) and the study recommended to tack in social intervention efforts in caring for the elderly, and the work of diverse activities that touch the social and psychological needs, and increasing the number of clubs and distribution of day to cover the needs of the elderly and support.

KEYWORDS: *Elderly & Day Care for the Elderly*

Original Article

Received: Jan 02, 2020; **Accepted:** Jan 22, 2020; **Published:** Feb 24, 2020; **Paper Id.:** IJEUFUSAPR20202

INTRODUCTION

The problems experienced by the elderly group are considered sensitive humanitarian and social issues that require social intervention to provide social care for them, not only at the family level for the elderly or at the level of voluntary social work affiliated with civil society institutions, or at the state level and its policies and institutions, but rather through solidarity and mobilize all these efforts and coordination among them towards providing integrated aspects of care and address these problems.

It also requires this solidarity in the societal and official efforts, as it is the result of a set of social, economic, political, technological and other different factors that affect society, its orientations and its cultural and value system, and are reflected on its social relations and its various interests, and this intricate complexity between the factors that affect the life of the elderly in Jordanian society is only through a united effort and responsibility from all societal parties.

The word elderly was used by the Arabs to refer to the old man, as the elderly means **language:** "The man's

teeth are old, and his age is older, he is old, he is old, and this is older than this, the age of any older than him" (Lisan Al-Arab, Ibn Manzur, 1999: I 3). As for the idiom, the elderly mean all who enter the stage of old age, starting from the age of 60 years, and they are that group of people who enter the stage of growth and maturity and some call them (the third age), which is a natural stage of a person's life (Hussein, 1995: 61).

People are also called male or female, who have passed the stages of growth, development, construction and maturity in their physiological forces and have reached the stages of pause and stability and the beginnings of weakness, loss and decline in some of the functions of those organs, devices, structures and components (Al-Zubaidi, 2009: 43). It also indicates the stage that witnesses a growing deficiency in adapting to the conditions, a lack of ability to conform, and an increasing deterioration in the organic and functional aspects of the body's systems (Ribhi, 1982: 28). The final stage of life is known when the brain cells are almost consumed, and this negatively affects the body's ability to perform its normal functions and is reflected in the human psyche and its sense of uselessness of its existence, and that it has become dependent on others and it is vulnerable to infection with the actual or psychological disease accompanying aging, (Key, 2001: 39).

The number of elderly people, who are over the age of 60 years and over in Jordan, based on the Annual Statistical Report 2018, issued by the Department of Public Statistics reached 561 thousand elderly people until the end of 2018, of whom (2,85,000) are elderly men with a percentage of 50.9%, while the number of women reached (275 thousand) (elderly women) is 49.1% of the total number of the elderly in Jordan (general statistics, 218 m). Given the increase in the number of elderly people, this increase resulted in many requirements to provide a decent life for this important group of society, and these requirements come as a result of conditions accompanying this age group needed for material assistance and health care because of the state of weakness and deterioration in the life of the elderly (Sumaya, 2017: 45).

WHAT IS THE SOCIAL PROBLEM AND ITS DIMENSIONS IN THE ELDERLY?

There are many social problems faced by the elderly in Jordan and in the world, in general, where each society has its different characteristics that will be reflected on the nature of the problems that appear in society without other societies, and by focusing on the most important social problems that have a great impact on the quality of life of the elderly and on their relationships with their social environment. Social problems were represented by the presence of social isolation, through poor social compatibility after retirement from work, or the death of a relative, or disobedience of children, in addition to losing the ability to make new friends, where he spends his time thinking and meditating with his past life. He also generates a feeling of alienating people, keeping them away from him and not participating in their social events and interacting with them.

The elderly enjoyed in their lives the formation of a social environment incubating them, and a network of relationships linking them with their social surroundings, whether it depends on the relationship of kinship and the bond of blood and intermarriage, or near housing, or through work friendships and others and being cut off from it is a social isolation from the reality that I belong to and felt that part of their interests and feelings increased the family's responsibilities towards the elderly in compensating them for this social loss, so that this is not a slow death that aggravates its problems among the elderly.

If the family relations are disjointed or weak, either with each other, i.e., within the family or in relation with their

social surroundings, as a result of their preoccupation with their practical life and economic circumstances, then their social relations' circle narrows with them to be limited to family relations only, and it follows that the family members are preoccupied with their private lives and their different jobs.

In addition to the elderly being affected by social deprivation, when they lose the ability to freedom of social communication according to their need and desires, the elderly group is one of the most vulnerable groups to social deprivation because of the depletion of their material resources and the weak physical forces that occur with advancing age (Ihsan, 1980: 67). This comes as the form of difficult challenges facing the elderly, as they are exposed to social isolation and social deprivation, either because of the severance of social relations or as the reason for severing social relations or as the reason for lack of economic resources, or as the low level of health and physical integrity, and on their social environment dependence to meet their basic needs and help them in what matters to their lives directly.

SOCIAL WELFARE FOR THE ELDERLY

The task of providing social care is one of the jobs that the family should perform in addition to other jobs, despite the circumstances and changes that have occurred in the nuclear family and as far as circumstances permit, because of its understanding of the methods of dealing with them, and its ability to maintain the standard of living and improve the quality of life for its members, the elderly come from the most needy category of the family to provide this constant care to compensate them for the loss of their social relationships and the fulfillment of their basic needs.

The family is considered as one of the most capable social institutions in order to meet the material and moral needs of the elderly, and to secure a sense of reassurance, psychological stability, love and respect because what the family members play towards the elderly is a positive and caring role that makes them feel that they are among their family and relatives and their children and that they have their value and status, and from that social care has been represented, as it is based on kindness and compassion during the provision of service to the elderly, but it exceeded this view in modern societies until it became as a comprehensive care aimed at investing the remaining energies and capabilities they have in them and their society for benefits and productivity , (Noura, 2018: 46).

The different socio-economic conditions that the family is going through and the weak family relations within it, in addition to the abandonment of their role by the children in caring for the elderly led to the emergence of the concept of social institutions that as an alternative to the family, provide different services to the elderly in an attempt to meet their needs and compensate them for the shortage they suffer from (such as shelters or day clubs), so that they work to support the family or as an alternative to it in carrying out the required duties towards the elderly. There is a responsibility of both the homes and day clubs in providing various forms of care for the elderly, and work on interface challenges they face in their lives, and to support the family in their care and follow up their affairs, working shelters, clubs, day official cover and follow-up actively by the competent authorities in preserving the foundations of social welfare and method of submission to keep the elderly from all forms of negligence towards them or infringing on them.

The elderly reside in the homes of the shelters completely, and their lives move from their familial nature to the nature of the shelters and their activities and interactions with their environment. This most certainly reflects on the elderly with social, psychological and health effects, which the shelters must recognize and seek to reduce them for fear of their aggravation. The studies have confirmed that was conducted on a number of elderly people residing in shelters or who spent long times in day clubs that they suffer from mental illnesses that affect their lives, limit their freedom and

independence, and reduce their effectiveness by communicating with the outside world, and that what these institutions offer destroys their personality and presence, no matter how efficient their services are because they cannot provide them appropriately with the love and intimacy of a family atmosphere (Hussein 2017: 52).

Social institutions or shelter homes are defined as those institutions established by society with the aim of caring for the elderly, who cannot care for themselves and their families, and are unable to take care of them, even partially, which provide social, health, psychological, economic, recreational and educational care as well as shelter service, (Khalil, 2003: 71).

While day clubs for the elderly are defined as institutions that provide day care for the elderly to benefit from them through multiple services, whether health, social, or psychological as well as the work of multiple programs and activities aimed at spending free time and recreation for them to return at the end of their day to their families and relatives, and to go about their family lives as usual.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem lies in revealing the social problems facing the elderly group, as the elderly group passes through social problems in addition to health, psychological, economic and other problems, which lead to a decline or change in the form of social family care in the elderly group, and a change in the extent of integration of the elderly, in relation to their social environment and the preservation of their social relationships that are formed through their various social interactions, as a result of social, economic and technological transformations witnessed by the Jordanian society in general and the Jordanian family in particular.

Hence, the problem of the study relates to the identification of social problems, such as isolation and long leisure time. The interruption of social relations and participation in social events, and the concern of family members with life matters, and many other problems that the elderly group suffers and the extent of its impact on the extent of interaction of the elderly with their social environment.

RESEARCH IMPORTANCE

The importance of the research comes from the fact that it is engaged in revealing the social problems experienced by the elderly and knowing the impact of these problems to the extent to which the elderly maintain their social relationships and interactions with their social environment. Amman as a community for research, the studies of which are rare to address the subject of research on this group, and the extent of its sensitivity in Jordanian society, and the difficulty of reaching the reality of family problems that society suffers from and determining its effects.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research aims to:

- Social, economic and demographic characteristics of the sample members.
- Social problems facing the elderly group.
- The nature of the relationship between the elderly and their social environment (family, club).
- Statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the social problems of the elderly due to the variables: (gender, marital status, age, health status, monthly income, kinship relationship and place of residence).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

His research attempts to answer the following questions:

The first question: What are the social, demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents?

The second question: What are the most important social problems facing researchers?

The third question: What is the nature of the relationship between the elderly and their social environment (family, club)?

Fourth question: Are there statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the social problems of the elderly due to the variables: (gender, marital status, age, health status, monthly income, kinship relationship and place of residence)?

RESEARCH APPROACH

The research used the social survey method, as it is one of the most appropriate approaches to the research objectives, and given its suitability for this type of data, and the nature of the research and its capabilities as well as the ability to collect the necessary data from the largest number of respondents.

RESEARCH SAMPLE

The study population consisted of all elderly persons aged 60 years and over, who are male and female, who are affiliated with day care homes and who are (152) elderly people, in the period during the year 2019 from (1/6/2019 - until 9/1/2019).

SEARCH TOOL

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher and by using the previous studies published in gathering information from the respondents according to the goals and research questions.

SEARCH LIMITS

Spatial Markers

The study addressed the elderly group in the city of Amman and its environs affiliated with the day clubs for the elderly.

Methodological Determinants

Including the inability to study all the elderly in the Jordanian society, the small number of individuals in the sample that are easy to access and obtain the data necessary to achieve the purposes of the research as well as the difficulty of extracting a random sample from the research community because of the small number and the lack of regularity to the homes of care for the elderly, lack of access to the structured statements by nursing homes for elderly affiliates.

Time Limits

The research was conducted in the time period in the third quarter of 2019, from 1/6/2019 - until 9/1/2019.

STABILITY OF THE TOOL

To test the stability of the questionnaire and its reliability in testing hypotheses and achieving the goals of the research, the internal consistency measure Cronbach alpha was used to measure the degree of reliability of the responses of the research community to the questionnaire's questions, and the results of calculating this parameter revealed that the stability of the

paragraphs was acceptable, which confirms the possibility of relying on the tool in hypotheses test.

STATISTICAL PROCESSING

A number of statistical methods have been relied upon, and by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, in order to use the data obtained to achieve the goals of the study and test its hypotheses. In the light of the nature of the study variables and methods of measurement and the purposes of analysis, the following statistical methods have been used to test the degree of credibility, the consistency of the data of the study instrument as well as the tendency measures 'use of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the study sample individuals to the questionnaire to test the study hypotheses, and the scattering measures the use of the standard deviation. The analysis of multiple variance was performed due to the presence of several variables, independent arguments and one dependent variable.

RESULTS

This part deals with a presentation of the results of the study, analysis and discussion, and it came as follows according to the questions of a study:

The First Question

Characteristics of the Study Sample According to its Variables

- **Sex**
 - With regard to the gender variable, females are the most frequent, which reached 69 by percentage of 51.11%, while males are the least frequent, which has reached 66 by a percentage of 48.89%, which indicates that females attend and participate in day club activities. It is remarkable and close to male presence, and it is not limited to males only.
- **Age**
 - As for the age variable, those whose age are 60–70, are the most frequent, (58 by a percentage of 42.96%, while those who are 70 and over are the least frequent and who are 38 have a percentage of 28.15%, which indicates that there is a percentage of the beneficiaries other than the elderly, and that the number of elderly people enrolling in the day-rounds decreases, as they age over 70 years and over.
- **Social Status**
 - As for the social status variable, those whose marital status is married are the most frequent, who reached 65 and by a percentage of 48.15%, while those whose marital status is absolute are the least frequent and who reached 11, i.e., 8.15%, while there are 26 elderly people, who have never been married, at a rate of 19.26%. The widening of a widowed case in second place with 33 elderly persons (24.44%), which indicates a clear diversification of the elderly affiliated with day clubs in relation to their social situation.
- **Health Status**
 - Regarding the variable of health condition, those whose health condition (chronic diseases) are the most frequent who reached 70 by percentage of 51.85%, while those who have health condition (good health) are the least frequent and who reached 7 percentage of 5.19%. In the neighborhood, the percentage of those who

were in a ill state of health (mild illnesses) reached 42.96% with a frequency of 58 elderly people, which indicates that there are various health problems experienced by the elderly affiliated with day clubs.

- **Relative Relation**

- As for the relationship variable, those who are related to kinship (husband) are the most frequent who reached 65 by a percentage of 48.15%, while those who are related to kinship (a girl) are the least frequent, who reached 10 and by a percentage of 7.41%. When those related to kinship (other) reached 46 with a percentage of 34.07%, and this indicates that the majority of the elderly affiliated with daycare homes do not have any children, whether male or female.

The Second Question

What are the Most Important Social Problems that the Elderly Suffers from?

It indicates that the elderly affiliated to the day club seek through their affiliation to work to form new friendships outside the family frame and compensate for the loss of their old social relationships, although they do not feel severe social isolation, and that they are trying not to feel the isolation and not to surrender to it and compensate the lack of participation in social events as well as getting out of thinking about death and the end of the term through these new relationships and participation in the activities provided by the club.

The Third Question

What is the Nature of the Relationship Between the Elderly and the Social Environment?

This indicates that the elderly affiliated with the day clubs are adapted to the social environment provided by them, and that it compensates them for the family environment that recorded a decrease in the relationship of the elderly with their families compared to their relationship with the day club and its affiliates.

Answer to the First Branch of the Third Question, which Stipulated What is the Nature of the Relationship Between the Elderly and their Families?

This indicates that there is a preoccupation with children in their daily lives at the expense of caring for them to a moderate degree, and at the same time, most of the elderly do not see that they have become dependent on their families, and they do not feel neglected by their families, and this does not reflect on their health, and their lack to spend more time with their grandchildren and to participate effectively with the social events around them.

Answer to the Second Branch of the Third Question, which States the Relationship of the Elderly with the Day Club for the Elderly?

Relationship of the elderly with the Day Club for the Elderly "as a whole (3.68) and with a high degree.

The Fourth Question

Are there Statistically Significant Differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in Social Problems According to Different Variables: Gender, Marital Status, Age, Health Status and Relationship to Kinship?

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in social problems according to the gender variable, and the differences were in favor of females.

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in social problems according to the variable (age).
- There are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in social problems according to the variable (marital status).
- There were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in social problems according to the variables (health status, kinship relationship), where the values of "F" did not reach the level of statistical significance (0.05).

CONCLUSIONS

- Intensifying social efforts to provide integrated care to the elderly class, by doing various activities that touch their needs and give them social protection.
- Increasing the number of working day clubs and distributing them in all regions to cover the needs and support of the elderly, under the supervision of specialists and followers of the circumstances of the elderly and their different needs.
- The allocation of social teams working to study and follow-up the elderly, who go to the daylight homes and reveal their needs and the problems they suffer from to support and support them within their families and not only within the activities of the daylight homes.
- Activating the civil and media institutions to assume their role in addition to the official institutions in providing social, psychological and economic forms of care for the elderly.

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